

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Medtronic Physio-Control Inc.

Impact Washington

Medtronic Physio-Control, Inc. Utilizes Training Within Industry to Reduce Training Time

Client Profile:

Medtronic Physio-Control is a manufacturer of LIFEPAK® defibrillators for hospitals, emergency medical services and minimally-trained lay responders. The company employs 400 people at its facility in Redmond, Washington.

Situation:

Physio Control's end of line defect rate on its defibrillators was too high. This rate led to the decision by the Federal Drug Administration to suspend Physio-Control defibrillator sales in the U.S. until this situation was corrected. The company needed a rapid solution and called Impact Washington, a NIST MEP network affiliate, for assistance.

Solution:

Impact Washington determined that the defect rate on the defibrillator line was caused in part by poor training of workers on the line. There was no systemic method to train them in standard work, so supervisors were training people differently, resulting in different work methods. Impact Washington provided a Job Instruction program for company employees to make sure they were all being trained in the same method. Each student was required to teach another student using the Job Instruction 4 Step method. As a result of Impact Washington's Training Within Industry's (TWI) Job Instruction program, Medtronic Physio-Control was able to reduce end of line defect rate by modifying their work instructions and making sure each worker was trained the same way.

Results:

* FDA lifted ban on sale of defibrillators to the U.S.

Testimonial:

"TWI really works, but several times you'll find that simple tasks that everyone takes for granted may not be covered in an engineering document, so it was an opportunity for us to use Job Instruction to cover those types of activities."

Kathie Lytle, Production Manager